

Reference Number: EOI/PADD/1224/393

**Expression of Interest
for
Engagement of organising entities under
Digital Readiness Certification project**



QUALITY COUNCIL OF INDIA

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EOI Notice

1. Quality Council of India invites proposals for **“Engagement of organising entities under Digital Readiness Certification project”**
2. The content of this Expression of Interest (EOI) enlists the requirements of the QCI. It includes the Bidding Terms which details out all that may be needed by the potential bidders to understand the terms and bidding process and explain the contractual terms that the QCI wishes to specify at this stage.
3. The empanelment will remain open throughout the financial year 2024-25 or as per the requirement of QCI.
4. The Technical Bids may be submitted in a PDF format to procurement@qcin.org on or before 25th of every month, addressed to Deputy Director (Finance & Accounts), Quality Council of India (QCI).
5. The decision of QCI, on the proposals received from the organisations, as per S. No. 4 above, shall be communicated to the qualifying agency by 20th of the consequent month after its due processing.

EOI Summary

S. No.	Item	Details
1.	Project Scope	Engagement of organising entities under Digital Readiness Certification project
2.	Proposal Selection	Based on qualification of pre-qualification criteria and technical evaluation round
3.	Contact Person for clarification	Procurement Team, QCI. procurement@qcin.org
4.	Technical Discussion Round	To be notified via email
5.	Documents to be submitted	Refer Clause-VIII: Submission of Proposal

I. INTRODUCTION

Quality Council of India (QCI)

QCI was established as an autonomous non-profit organization by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt. of India in partnership with the Indian Industry. QCI plays a pivotal role in propagating, adoption and adherence to quality standards in all important spheres of activities including education, healthcare, environment protection, governance, social sectors, infrastructure sector and such other areas of organized activities that have significant bearing in improving the quality of life and well-being of the citizens of India.

To achieve this, QCI is playing a pivotal role in propagating, adoption and adherence to quality standards in all important spheres of activities including education, healthcare, environment protection, governance, social sectors, infrastructure sector and such other areas of organized activities that have significant bearing in improving the quality of life and well-being of the citizens of India.

It functions through its five constituent Boards and Project Implementation Divisions to establish National Accreditation Programme and Third-Party Assessment models with an aim to improve the quality ecosystem of the nation.

Project Analysis and Documentation (PAD) Division

The Project Analysis and Documentation (PAD) Division of QCI focuses on designing, developing, and implementing voluntary conformity assessment frameworks for governmental, regional, and global organizations. It collaborates with various stakeholders, including government ministries, international bodies like FAO, UNFSS, and SAARC, to deliver impactful solutions. Managing certification schemes across diverse sectors—such as agriculture, food, healthcare, and industry—the division ensures alignment with global standards, striving for international equivalence through benchmarking and mapping with ITC standards.

II. AIM OF THE PROJECT

Quality Council of India (QCI) seeks proposals from eligible organizing entities to participate in the Digital Readiness Certification (DRC) project, which aims to enhance the digital capabilities of grassroots institutions such as Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs), and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). By classifying businesses as "DigiReady," this initiative promotes digital inclusion and provides these entities with a recognized quality mark, improving their visibility and credibility in the digital marketplace. Digital Readiness Certification (DRC) is a collaboration between Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) and Quality Council of India (QCI). The project seeks to foster economic growth and drive digital transformation, particularly for organizations at the base of the economic pyramid, empowering them to thrive in an increasingly digital economy.

III. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

The organizing entities are going to be tasked with onboarding institutions onto the Digital Readiness Certification (DRC) platform. The scope of work includes the following key responsibilities:

A. Key Responsibilities:

1. Onboarding Support:

Organizing entities will visit registered businesses, verify information on-site, and monitor their certification process. This includes explaining them the entire process of portal registration, data entry, and documentation submission.

2. **Training and Awareness:**

Conduct awareness programs about the DRC portal and its benefits. Entities will educate FPOs, SHGs, and MSMEs on digital readiness requirements and the certification process.

3. **Field Verification:**

Perform ground-level verification of existing registered entities using data provided by the QCI team. This ensures the authenticity and accuracy of information submitted during the certification process.

4. **Technical Assistance:**

Provide technical support for entities facing challenges during onboarding. This involves resolving issues related to profiles, phone numbers, and documentation in coordination with the DRC secretariat.

B. Deliverables:

The deliverables for the organising entities include the following:

1. Onboarding of entities
2. Monitoring on-site verifications
3. Conducting awareness sessions

IV. PRE-QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

S. No.	Basic Requirement	Specific Requirements	Documents Required
1	Legal Entity	<p>The Bidder(s) interested in participating in the Selection Process must be a duly registered legal entity in India, under any one of the following categories: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Limited Liability Partnership (“LLP”) registered under the LLP Act, 2008;• an Indian Company (“Company”) registered under the Companies Act, 1956/ 2013;• a “Partnership Firm” registered under the Indian Partnership Act, 1932;• a Sole Proprietorship firm, registered as such under the Applicable Laws of India• Registered under Societies Registration Act, 1860, or Indian Trusts Act, 1882 of Government of India or a subsidiary of the main Society/Trust working in the field of awareness programs for FPOs/SHGs/JFMCs/MSMEs.	<p>Registration documents of the Bidder as a company/firm or any legal entity along with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporation Certificate of the company• PAN Card of the registered legal entity• GST certificate of the registered legal entity• Certified copy of registered Partnership Deed; copy of Statement filed in the Register of Firms disclosing names, addresses and relevant details of ALL partners of the Partnership Firm• Certified copy of registered Society/NGO• NABCB Accreditation certificate for Certification/Inspection Body (if applicable)• MSME Certificate (if applicable)• Any other supporting document, as may be required

		With minimum 1 year of existence at the time of submission of the bid.	
2	Work experience	Proven track record in working with grassroots institutions such as FPOs, SHGs, and JFMCs. Prior experience in digital transformation initiatives for base-of-the-pyramid communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract/ Agreement/ Work Orders/ Completion certificate from client(s) OR self-certification by the agency verified by Managing Director/Authorized Signatory.
3	Operational Capacity	Established presence and operational infrastructure in rural, semi-urban and urban areas. Capability to conduct outreach, training, and verification activities in remote locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertaking/ self-certification by the agency verified by Managing Director/Authorized Signatory
4	Non- Blacklisting	The bidding entity must not be blacklisted / terminated / debarred by any state or central government or their agencies or autonomous body and should not have been found guilty of any criminal offence by any court of law, in the last three (3) years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertaking to be submitted in the attached format as per Annexure-C only signed by the authorized signatory

Interested Bidders submitting their proposals are expected to meet the above pre-qualification criteria. In case any Bidder fails to either meet all these criteria or does not furnish the requisite supporting documents/ documentary evidence in support thereof, the bid is liable to be summarily rejected.

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The technical evaluation shall be based on the following criteria:

S. No.	Criteria	Weightage
1	Understanding of scope of work along with approach and methodology to carry out the deliverables	20
2	Past training reports, or relevant project documentation showcasing familiarity with digital platforms and the ability to provide handholding support during onboarding. Capacity to deliver training and awareness programs on digital readiness.	30
3	Testimonials from community leaders or local authorities, and references from community projects depicting established trust and communication channels within target communities. Engagement with community leaders and organizations.	25
4	Executive project reports, third-party validations, or examples of past initiatives supporting digital transformation, community empowerment and alignment of the entity's mission with DRC's goal to enhance digital readiness.	25
	Total	100

Minimum marks required for technical qualification is 70 out of 100.

VI. METHOD OF SELECTION

The agencies that qualify the prequalification criteria and technical evaluation criteria will be selected for empanelment under Digital Readiness Certification (DRC) project.

VII. TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

1. **Duration of empanelment:** The empanelment will be valid for a period of one (01) year, extendable based on performance of the agency and requirement of QCI.
2. **Authorization of Signatory:** The Bid may be signed either by the Principal Officer of the service providing firm or his duly Authorized Representative, in which case he/she shall submit a certificate of authority. All certificates and documents (including any clarifications sought and any subsequent correspondence) received hereby, shall, as far as possible, be furnished and signed by the Representative or the Principal Officer. The Principal Officer/ authorized representative of the firm shall sign the proposal and also initial all pages of the original Technical Proposal. The authorization shall be in the form of a written power of attorney accompanying the Proposal or in any other form demonstrating that the representative has been duly authorized to sign. The power or authorization, or any other document consisting of adequate proof of the ability of the signatory to bind the Bidder shall be annexed to the Bid.
3. **Presentation:** As a part of Evaluation of proposals submitted by the applicants, QCI may seek further information or a presentation from the bidders for evaluation purposes. QCI may call for such information/presentation at a short notice.
4. **Terms of Reference:** The terms of reference will be shared with the qualified agencies explaining terms of empanelment, payment terms and other contractual obligations. The agencies that formally accept these terms will be empanelled and authorized to proceed with the assigned work.
5. **Amendments to EOI:** At any time prior to the last date for receipt of applications, QCI may for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective applicant, modify the EOI document by an amendment. In order to provide prospective applicants reasonable time to take the proposed amendments into account while preparing their proposals, QCI may at its discretion extend the last date for the receipt of proposals and/or make other changes in the requirements set out in the EOI. Any such amendment shall be communicated to the service providers.
6. **Conflict of Interest:**
 - i. QCI requires that organization provides professional, objective, and impartial analysis and data, strictly avoid conflicts with other assignment/jobs or their own corporate interests and act without any consideration for future work.
 - ii. In the event that a Service Provider identifies a potential conflict of interest, they shall make a disclosure to QCI as soon as any potential conflict comes to their notice but in no case later than 7 (seven) days from the receipt of such proposals and any breach of this obligation of disclosure shall be construed as Conflict of Interest. QCI shall, upon being notified by the Service Provider under this Clause, decide whether it wishes to terminate this service or otherwise, and convey its decision to the service provider within a period not exceeding 15 (fifteen) days.

7. **Language:** The Proposal should be filled by the bidders in English language only. If any supporting documents submitted are in any language other than English, translation of the same in English language is to be duly attested by the Bidders. For purposes of interpretation of the documents, the English translation shall govern. All correspondence and documents relating to the Proposal exchanged by the bidder and QCI shall also be written in the English language.
8. **Companies' Personnel:** The service provider shall employ and provide at its own cost such qualified and experienced audit personnel as are required to carry out the Services. Their salaries, claims, insurance, damages, compensation, travel etc. will be the liability of the service provider(s) and QCI will in no way be responsible for any such claims/ damages.
9. **Training:** The service provider shall organize open user trainings while onboarding of users.
10. **Ethics:** QCI expects all assessors, Service Provider to show highest ethical standards during the course of the assignment; if any complaints/information regarding any incident of bribery, corrupt payment, an unauthorized offer etc., is brought to the fore, the Service Provider shall take the necessary action (to the extent of expulsion/removal) as per its organization rules and laws applicable at that time; QCI is absolved of any liability/claim arising out of any such above situations; all personnel should have signed the code of conduct with the Service Provider and any conflict of interest shall be declared to QCI.
11. The contract will be awarded to the service provider whose proposal conforms to this EOI and is, in the opinion of QCI, the most advantageous and represents the best value to the assignment, price and other factors considered.
12. **Written Undertakings:** QCI may at any time require the Service Provider and its employees/advisors/professionals/ contractors, to whom confidential information may be disclosed in the course of execution of contract, to give a written undertaking in the form of a deed reasonably accepted to QCI and relating to the use and non-disclosure of the confidential information relating to QCI or any Government Department or relating to any Ministry and or such other information that QCI suggests to be confidential. Upon receiving a request aforesaid the Service Provider must promptly arrange for all such undertakings to be given to QCI.
13. **Deployment of Technical Resources:** The Service Provider shall provide the technical and other staff during the execution of this project depending upon the requirement of work.
14. **Subcontracting:** There must be no further subcontracting without prior written consent of QCI; all manpower deployed by the Service provider shall be on-roll employees of the Service provider or must have a direct employment contract with the Service provider.
15. **Access by QCI:**
 - i. The QCI may, at all reasonable times and on giving reasonable notice to the Service Provider access the premises of the Service Provider to the extent relevant to the performance of this contract; require the provision by the Service Provider, its employees, personnel or professionals agents of records and information in a data format and storage medium accessible by the QCI by use of the Service Provider existing computer hardware and software; inspect and copy documentation, books and records, however stored, in the custody or under the control of the Service Provider, its employees, agents, professional or personnel; and require assistance in respect of any inquiry in to or concerning the Services or this Contract.
 - ii. For these purposes an inquiry includes any audit whether administrative or statutory review 'audit or inquiry (whether within or external to the Department), any request for information directed to the QCI by any authority or Government Department or any Ministry and any inquiry conducted by Parliament or any Parliamentary committee.

- iii. The Service Provider must provide access to its computer hardware and software to the extent necessary for the Service Provider to exercise its rights under this clause, and provide QCI with any reasonable assistance requested by the Service Provider to use that hardware and software provided that any proprietary information including confidential information like profit margins, overheads and other such confidential information about its employees, sub-contractors, organization would not be made available.
16. **Maintenance of Confidentiality:**
- i. The bidder(s) must not divulge any confidential information and assure that reasonable steps are taken to provide for the safe custody of any and confidential information in its possession and to prevent unauthorized access thereto or use thereof. The shortlisted bidder(s) must not, without the prior written consent of QCI, disclose any confidential information of QCI or any government department or relating to any ministry or any other party. In giving written consent to the disclosure of confidential information, QCI may impose such conditions as it thinks fit, and the bidder must comply with these conditions. Confidentiality clause shall survive for a longer period of one year after the termination of contract or contract expiry period.
 - ii. No part of this document including the Annexure can be reproduced in any form or by any means, disclosed or distributed to any person without the prior consent of QCI, except to the extent required for submitting the bid. The information contained in this document is only disclosed for the purposes of enabling potential service providers to submit a proposal to QCI. This document should not therefore be used for any other purpose. These documents contain proprietary information furnished for evaluation purposes only; except with the written permission of the QCI, such information may not be published, disclosed, or used for any other purpose. The bidding firms acknowledge and agree that this document and all portions thereof, including, but not limited to, any copyright, trade secret and other intellectual property rights relating thereto, are and at all times shall remain the sole property of QCI. The title and full ownership rights in the information contained herein and all portions thereof are reserved to and at all times shall remain with QCI. service providers must agree to take utmost care in protecting the proprietary and confidential nature of the information contained herein.
17. QCI reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the entire bid process or reject all bids at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected service provider(s) or any obligation to inform the affected service provider(s) the grounds for such decision. QCI also reserves the right to negotiate with the successful service provider, if necessary.
18. **Removal of Data:** The Service Provider must ensure that its employees/ professionals' subcontractors and/ personnel do not:
- i. remove any data or allow any data concerned with this contract to be removed from the places as notified/directed by QCI; or
 - ii. take any data or allow any data to be taken outside of India, without QCI's prior written consent.
19. During evaluation, QCI may, at its discretion, ask the respondents for clarifications on their proposals. The firms/agencies are required to respond within the time frame prescribed by QCI.
20. QCI may at its sole discretion and at any time during the evaluation of proposal, disqualify any respondent, if the firm:
- i. Submitted the proposal after the response deadline

- ii. Made misleading or false representations in the forms, statements and attachments submitted in proof of the eligibility requirements
 - iii. Exhibited a record of poor performance such as abandoning works, not properly completing the contractual obligations, inordinately delaying completion or financial failures, etc. in any project in the preceding three years.
 - iv. Submitted a proposal that is not accompanied by required documentation or is non-responsive, failed to provide clarifications related thereto, when sought
 - v. Submitted more than one proposal
 - vi. Was declared ineligible by the Government of India/State/UT Government for corrupt and fraudulent practices.
21. **Force Majeure:** Neither party shall be held responsible for non-fulfillment of their respective obligations due to the exigency of one or more of the force majeure events such as but not limited to Acts of God, war, flood, earthquakes, strike, lockouts, epidemics, pandemics, riots, civil commotion etc., provided on the occurrence and cessation of any such events. The affected party thereby shall give a notice in writing to the other party within one week of such occurrence or cessation. If the force majeure conditions continue beyond six months, the parties may then mutually decide about the future course of action.
- Force Majeure shall not include:
- i. any event which is caused by the negligence or intentional action of a Party or by or of such Party's agents or employees, nor
 - ii. any event which a diligent Party could reasonably have been expected both to take into account at the time of the signing of the Contract and avoid or overcome with utmost persistent effort in the carrying out of its obligations hereunder.
 - iii. Insufficiency of funds or manpower or inability to make any payment required for execution of services under this Contract.
22. **Indemnity:** Service Provider undertakes to indemnify QCI from and any losses that QCI may incur due to any deficiency in services rendered by Service Provider or any instance of corruption or improper payment.
23. **Taxes & Duties:** The service provider shall be liable to pay all direct and indirect taxes, duties, fees and other impositions levied under the laws of India.
24. **Validity of Proposals:** The proposals shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from 25th day of month in which the application was submitted. In exceptional circumstances, QCI may solicit the bidder's consent to an extension of the period of validity. The request and the responses thereto shall be made in writing. A bidder consenting to such request shall not be required nor permitted to modify its Proposal.
25. QCI, by issuance of this EOI does not necessarily indicate or imply that the project will be commenced. The service provider will absolve QCI of all responsibilities if the project does not start within a stipulated time frame. QCI reserves the right to withdraw this assignment any time without prior consultation or intimation to the service provider.
26. The service provider shall not make any alteration / changes in the bid after the closing time and date. Unsolicited correspondence from the service provider will not be considered.
27. The service provider shall be deemed to have complied with all clauses in this EOI. Evaluation shall be carried out on the available information in the bid and QCI is not liable to seek clarifications on the documents not submitted as part of the bid.
28. The firms / agencies submitting their proposals would be responsible for all of its expenses, costs and risks incurred towards preparation and submission of their proposals, attending any pre-proposal meeting and visiting the site or any other location in connection therewith. QCI shall,

in no case, be responsible or liable for any such costs whatsoever, regardless of the outcome of the process.

29. **Disclaimer:** QCI shall not be responsible for any late receipt of applications for any reasons whatsoever. The applications received late will not be considered.

QCI reserves the right

- i. To reject any/all applications without assigning any reasons thereof.
- ii. To relax or waive any of the conditions stipulated in this document as deemed necessary in the best interest of the QCI without assigning any reasons thereof.
- iii. To include any other item in the Scope of work at any time after consultation with applicants or otherwise
- iv. To adopt method deemed fit to evaluate the proposals
- v. To select multiple Service Provider for the project for allocation of work in different areas if it meets the essential criteria for qualification.

VIII. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The intending Service Provider is expected to prepare proposals covering the following aspects:

A. Technical Proposal

1. Supporting documents for the details required as per pre-qualification criteria
2. Form A: Application form
3. Form B and C
4. Relevant documents as per eligibility criteria
5. Any other details that the bidder may like to provide.

B. Submission Details

1. All the pages of the proposal must be sequentially numbered and must contain the list of contents with page numbers. Any deficiency in the documentation may result in the rejection of the Bid.
2. Interested parties may submit the technical documents in a PDF format with the subject line “**Proposal for Empanelment of organising entities under Digital Certification Readiness project**” to procurement@qcin.org by 25th of every month by 1700 Hrs.

For any queries, you may contact the below:

Procurement Team, QCI

Email id: procurement@qcin.org

Annexure-A**Form A: Application Form**

S. No.	Particulars	Details
1	Name of the Organization	
2	Name, Designation of Head of the organization	
3	Mobile No. of the Head of the Organization	
4	Email ID of the Head of the Organization	
5	Legal Status	
6	Date of Incorporation/Registration	
7	No. of Years in operation	
8	Address and Contact for Correspondence: a) Regional Office:	
	b) Corporate Office:	
9	Single Point of Contact for EOI	
	Name	
	Designation	
	Mobile No.	
	Landline No.	
	Email ID	
10	PAN no.	
11	GST Number	
12	Account No.	
13	Name of the Account	
14	Name and Address of the Bank	
15	RTGS/NEFT CODE	
16	IFSC Code	

- Geographical Areas (Name of States/UTs) where the Organisation has strength in conducting programmes? _____
- Availability of people fluent in English, Hindi and the relevant regional language during the programme? (Yes/No) _____

Name of Head of the Organisation:

Signature:

Date:

Place:

Form B: Relevant Project Experience

S. No.	Name of the Project/ Engagement	Client Name	Duration (Period)

Form C: Format for Non-Blacklisting Undertaking

(To be submitted on the Letterhead of the responding firm)

To,
Deputy Director (Finance & Accounts),
Quality Council of India,
Institution of Engineers Building,
2nd Floor, 2, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
New Delhi-110002

Subject: Non-Blacklisting declaration in connection with EOI Ref. No. _____ dated _____ for _____

Dear Sir,

This is to notify you that our Firm/Company/Organisation _____ intends to submit proposal in response to invitation for Tender Ref. No. _____ for <>. In accordance with the above, we declare that:

- a. We are not involved in any major litigation that may have an impact of affecting or compromising the delivery of services as required under this agreement
- b. We are not blacklisted by any Central/ State Government/ agency of Central/ State Government of India or any other country in the world/ Public Sector Undertaking/ any Regulatory Authorities in India or any other country in the world for any kind of fraudulent activities.

Dated this Day of (Year)

(Signature) (In the capacity of)

Duly authorized to sign the Proposal Response for and on behalf of:

(Name and Address of Company) Seal/Stamp of Bidder